

those interesting paradoxes of character, in which a man is distinctly seen to be better than his creed. Jacob, you can't pull the wool over our eyes like that. You are the most enthusiastic optimist in the Brethren Church today. Come out of that pessimistic hole. We know who you are.

NEGLECT OF LITTLE THINGS

ANNA WOOD

Neglect of small things is the rock on which the great majority of the human race have divided.

Our lives consist of a succession of small events, each of which seems comparatively unimportant, and yet the happiness and success of every one depends upon the manner in which these small events are dealt with. Character is built upon little things. The success of every one depends upon the attention given these little things.

The things may appear very small and insignificant, yet attention to them is as necessary as to matters of greater importance.

"Small may seem the service
Rich the great reward
Here a cross but there a crown of joy."

To all of us there are times in our lives when our future destiny depends on one single little act, and if we neglect to do that seemingly small thing what will be the result?

When we neglect our duty it often causes us sorrow and distress, if we do not speak for Christ when the opportunity is given us, we not only lose that opportunity but we feel condemned and lose a blessing.

When great warriors go out to battle they are very careful to leave nothing undone that will help them to gain the victory, and that is the way that soldiers for Christ ought to battle against sin and satan.

Let us leave nothing undone that will help to advance the cause of our blessed Redeemer.

South Haven Kan.

AN ABSURD CLAIM

E. L. YODER

I have lately heard it claimed from pulpit and press that Christ the divine was a pessimist. Of course none but a pessimist, or an unbeliever in the divinity of Christ would make such an assertion, and due allowance must be made for the source from which the expression came and yet it seems to me to be not only absurd but irreverent as well.

I once heard an anarchist claim that Christ was an anarchist, and I was shocked at such irreverent presumption; but on reflecting that but few anarchists care to associate with Christ I concluded that there must be different kinds of anarchists and felt more charitably inclined towards the author of the expression. So there are, too, different kinds of pessimists, and we must not condemn too severely an expression from one who may love Christ, tho he must

have a different conception of the divine character and attributes from that which we ourselves entertain. One thing however is certain, either I have a wrong conception of the pessimist or the pessimist making the above assertion has a wrong conception of Christ.

Am I right in my conception of what a pessimist is? Let us see: Webster's definition is short. After telling us that the word is derived from French, Spanish and Latin words, meaning *the worst*, he defines the noun *pessimist* to be "one who complains of every thing as being for the worst."

In a sermon delivered several years ago, from Psalm 27: 13, the Rev. James M. Campbell, took the position that David was inclined to be pessimistic by looking at things in a wrong direction. The thing that saved him, the rope to which he clung as he was being swept along on the tide of his fears towards the dark gulf of despair, was the conviction that things were in God's hands and that they therefore were bound to grow better. "I had fainted" he said "unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living."

"Strip pessimism of its mask" says this preacher, "and it is seen to be unbelief, and unbelief is blind. It has no bright visions of the future. No star of hope shines in its sky. It is dark and cheerless." Faith expects to see enrapturing visions. It expects to see greater things than it has yet discovered, "even in the land of the living."

Dr. Matt. S. Hughes, in a lecture recently delivered in Kansas City, on the *American Pessimist*, claimed that this condition in mankind is the result of the *physical* condition of the person afflicted, and suggests recourse to the family physician as one cure.

Another cause for pessimism as given by him was the point of view taken, and he maintained that any one who was in poor physical condition and had the inclination could so look at everything in the world as to make of himself a first class pessimist.

Now I must say that my conceptions of Christ are so different from my conceptions of a pessimist according to the above definition and description that I am astonished above measure to hear of any preacher of the gospel, however inexperienced, unlearned and egotistical he may be, stand before an audience and glory in being a pessimist for Christ's sake, and I am just as much and even more astounded for any one claiming superior knowledge of God and Christ, and especially of God's word, and claim that Christ was a pessimist.

Christ is the light of the world. The light shineth into darkness but the darkness comprehendeth it not. Christ is the light itself, but the pessimist does not see the light because he persists in seeing only dark things.

Christ said of himself "I am the truth," but this declaration of Christ is flatly contradicted by the pessimist, who himself cannot see and comprehend the truth, but "com-

plains of everything as being for the worst." To say that Christ was a pessimist denies to him the attribute of omniscience.

In the conflict between the Prince of the house of David and the prince of darkness the pessimist can see only victory for the prince of darkness. Not so Christ, he knows that he will triumph over all his foes.

Christ was influenced by the joy that was set before him, to endure the cross, despise the shame and suffer the contradiction of sinners against himself. "The joy which was set before him" was the redemption of sinners and the salvation of the world. A pessimist can have no real joy for he sees only a lost and ruined world, and the great scheme of redemption, which is the product of the best thought of Almighty God, a miserable failure.

Christ taught that *many* shall come from the east and the west and the north and the south and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, but a pessimist will insist that only a few will be saved.

John the revelator beheld, not with optimistic, but with true vision, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and language stand before the throne, and before the Lamb clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; but the pessimist will say, away with such teaching, it is not true it is optimistic; only a few will be saved.

The pessimist if he is wealthy may find a way to escape from the declaration of Christ when he said, It is as impossible for a camel to go thru the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven; but because he is a pessimist he would have an insurmountable difficulty in making a strait gate and narrow way wide enough for a multitude to travel on.

He may find a way to give a not too literal interpretation to that part of Christ's sermon which seems to forbid organized charity. Matt. 6: 3, 4. Or that seems to forbid public prayer. Matt. 6: 6. Or that as forbidding all plans and provisions for the future, Matt. 6: 25. But where the literal word coincides with his pessimistic views he would admit of no departure from a *very literal* interpretation, no matter how much it might conflict with other passages of scripture, or with a reasonable or common sense conclusion.

But why pursue this subject any further? I will conclude as I began by saying it sounds to me both absurd and irreverent to have Christ called a pessimist. Isaiah names him The Wonderful, The Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Think of those exalted names given by the inspired prophet, and the meaning of each one of them separately, and have some puny man brush them all aside, and substitute the name *pessimist* for the Exalted One. For every one of the above names must first be set aside before a name meaning, "One who complains of